

project was submitted to the state advisory committee of the Civil Works Administration and the State Water Conservation Board. The project proposed the building of a reservoir south of Flatwillow Creek in Sec. 18-T11N-R25E. The reservoir would be filled from Flatwillow Creek via a ditch commencing several miles to the west. The water would be stored for release into Flatwillow Creek during the dry months when the flow would normally be too low for irrigation.

The estimated cost of the plan was \$233,000. It was to be funded with federal and state funds. Eleven to fifteen thousand acres were to be irrigated. Unlike the Carey Act proposal, however, the primary purpose of this plan was to store water to irrigate lands already being irrigated, not to develop new lands.

Unforeseen problems developed and the plan was modified. In March 1934 a Flatwillow Water Conservationist Association was formed with Earl Clark, Warren Swingle, Emil Zimmerman, M. J. Boyd, Jacob Thum and Hall Clement as directors. E. J. Parkinson, county surveyor, with a crew of eleven men began a survey for a different dam site than the original project had specified. The new site was to be located about 15 miles west of the Petroleum County line on the north fork of Flatwillow Creek. Before the survey was completed, however, the Civil Works Administration was closed by the federal government, leaving the project without a source of funding.

In 1935 another proposal was put forth for the Flatwillow locality. This time, however, the water was not to be taken from Flatwillow Creek but rather from Yellow Water Creek. E. J. Parkinson surveyed and laid out a dam site about six miles east of the Fergus County line on Yellow Water Creek. The dam was to be a quarter of a mile long, 31 feet high and have a capacity to store 4400 acre feet of water. The project was approved by the

necessary federal and state agencies.

The State Water Conservation Service provided two 65-horsepower Caterpillar tractors, a scarifier, a heavy 12' grader, a seven-yard LaTourneau carryall scraper and other machinery and equipment. Men from the Civilian Conservation Corp, working three shifts a day in the summer of 1937, performed the labor. And labor it was! Over a two-year period, 200,000 cubic yards of dirt and 90,000 cubic yards of rock were moved. The reservoir was completed in June 1938.

In 1940 a Yellow Water Irrigation District was organized with Glen Stroup, president; William Youderian, vice-president; and Albert Mlekush, secretary-treasurer. The group began preparing the necessary papers for surveying and building ditches. Various federal reclamation funds were sought but progress was slow and the project was not completed.

June 1944 was an exceptionally wet month with 8.18 inches of rain reported at Flatwillow for the month. Yellow Water Reservoir was full and running over the spillway for the first time in its history.

It was not until 1948 that the dam was actively used for irrigation. Robert Raundal, Floyd Hill, Joe King, O. B. Canfield, and T. H. Woodworth incorporated the Yellow Water Water Users' Association. The association drew up the necessary papers to purchase water rights from the State Water Conservation Board, to determine individual water allocations, and to plan the construction of ditches. The Yellow Water Water Users' Association has been in existence continuously since that time. Present members of the association are Floyd Hill, Keith Reynolds, Jack Kiehl and Joe King, III.

Yellow Water Reservoir has become a recreation area under the direction of State Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department. An improved road to the area was completed in 1951.

Schools

The first schools in the area were held in people's homes and the teachers were either volunteer or the families paid a tuition. One such school was taught by Mrs. Mattie Sherman at Flatwillow.

District #26 was the first school district to be created in what is now Petroleum County. In 1898 a petition was sent to E. S. Peebles, Superintendent of Schools for

Fergus County, Montana, requesting that a school district be formed with boundary lines as follows:

"Beginning at the northwest corner of Township 14N of Range 23E and following eastward along the north line of Township 14N to the Musselshell River, thence, up the Musselshell River to the south line of Township 12 north, Thence west along the south line of Township 12N to the



Flatwillow Schoolhouse and yard (Hotel and store across the street)

west line of Range 23E, thence, north to place of starting."

As one can see, this district included all of Petroleum County south of the present Highway #200 plus two townships to the west (12 miles west of the present county line).

Families represented on the petition were: Degner, Gray, Jenkins, Thompson, Hansen, Shaw, Bean, Nerbourg, Cinnamon, Guiler, Tocheleau, Franklin, Oleson, Boyle, Jones, Wise, Finkbeiner and Quillette. Forty-seven children were listed ranging in age from six to 19.

The petition was granted on September 15, 1899. (A copy of the petition is on file at the public library in Winnett.) The first trustees were Mattie Sherman, Bertha Wood and George Wright.

The first school in the district was named Flatwillow with Laura Archer as teacher. It is believed she taught three-month sessions at various locations throughout the district. The original schoolhouse at Flatwillow Crossing was an old log cabin that was a bunkhouse in one end and a school in the other.

Legend has it that school was held in the Yellow Dog Saloon by day, and a saloon was run in the building at night. Fern and Leone Millsap, daughters of Frank Millsap, say this was not true. Their father ran the saloon and it was a stopping place for people waiting for the stage, meeting other people and playing cards. It took the place of a hotel lobby or a waiting room and was not a saloon in the terms we think of now.

In 1911 the school board members were Perry Baker, Frank Millsap and George Davis. Because the district was so big, they hired teachers for a large area including Winnett, Brush Creek and Cat Creek (later known as the Shay School) even though the two latter schools were several miles north of the legal boundary of the district. The board hired Harry Tripp to teach the Brush Creek School and Howard Tripp the Cat Creek School in 1912-13. In 1911 they contracted with Frank Moshner to build two new schoolhouses. One was to be built at Flatwillow (Sec 1-12-26) and the other to be built in Winnett

The first teacher in the new Flatwillow School building was Hallie King. Miss King came to Flatwillow from Minneapolis and was hired at a wage of \$60 a month to teach. In her words, "There were about thirty children in school — all grades. After I had taught a month, the school board raised my salary to \$70 a month.

"Mrs. Millsap ran the hotel, and was for anything that was for the betterment of the school. In the two years that I taught there, I don't believe there was a day she didn't send coffee over for my lunch. She decided we needed a piano for the school, so she sponsored a box social to raise money. Every lady brought a lunch in a box and the boxes were auctioned off to the highest bidder. The buyer got to eat lunch with the lady who donated the box. Some boxes brought as much as fifteen dollars, and the social netted enough to buy a piano.

"The Christmas program was always a big event.



Teacherage at Flatwillow with schoolgirls Ruth Noll (mostly hidden), Helene Stroup, Anna Noll, Jerra Lee Wilson, Arlene Johnke, Mabel Redd, Paula Johnke



Flatwillow School in 1931. (Back row) Junior Pollock, George McCollum, Iver Rostad, Louise Berven, Frances Sharkey, Helen McCollum, Verna McCollum. (Middle row) Glen McCollum, Lloyd Doman, Vernard McCollum, Victor Sharkey, Farrel Johnke, Sigrid Rostad, Phyllis Johnke. (Front row) Harry Redd, Eugene Johnke, Shirley Johnke, Annette Rostad, Evelyn Johnke

George Davis accepted contributions for gifts for all the children and also treats of candy, nuts, and apples for everyone. Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Baker, Mrs. Millsap and I selected gifts for eighty children. Mr. Jim Wilson Sr. always had a box of oranges delivered from Billings as his share of the treat. The tree was decorated with lighted candles.

"One year when Pete Duncan was acting Santa Claus, while he was up on a stepladder trying to reach gifts on the tree, he lost his balance and fell into the tree. I'll never know what stopped the candles from starting a fire. It would have been terrible because the schoolhouse was packed with people, and the only exit was next to the tree.

"One day in the middle of winter when the snow was deep and it was bitterly cold, I looked out the window and saw the three Sharkey children fall at the gate. We ran out and got them into the schoolhouse. I sent for Mrs.



Rhythm Band (1935): (Row 1) Helen Redd, Angelu Tripp. (Row 2) Dennis Smith, Billy Redd, Martin Johnke, Jo Ann Tripp, Mabel Redd, Mavis Smith. (Row 3) Fairman Carter, unknown, Eugene Johnke, Clemence Rhea, Rozella Johnke, Evelyn Johnke, Mrs. Harry Tripp, conductress. (Row 4) Farrel Johnke, Phyllis Johnke, Ruth Rhea, Margaret Wiggins, Ruth Tripp, Helen Rhea



Flatwillow Schoolchildren: Jody Wiggins, Jim Johnke, Bob Johnke, Phil Pugrud, Steve Johnke, Larry Tripp, Sandra Thomas, Luann Sharkey, Heather Mlekush



Cast for the production of "Tom Thumb Wedding": (Row 1) Rozella Johnke, Jane Rhea, Rex Redd, Paula Johnke. (Row 2) Aleta Smith, Angelu Tripp, Helen Redd, Arlene Johnke, Virginia Rhea. (Row 3) Mavis Smith, Mabel Redd, Jo Ann Tripp, Fairman Carter. (Row 4) Eugene Johnke, Ruth Rhea, Harry Redd, Bill Redd, Dennis Smith (mostly hidden), and Shirley Johnke

Millsap and we worked over them for a long time before they were able to get around. I sent one of the big boys, with a horse, up to Sharkeys to tell them what had happened. Mr. Sharkey came down in a bobsled, bundled the children in a feather bed, and took them home."

District #26 also operated an early school in Howard Coulee located in Sec. 27-12-27.

The area encompassed in District #26 was eventually carved into 15 separate school districts as people began to demand control of their own schools. In many instances a fairly large new district was created; then as more people settled, the newer district was divided into several more districts. It was an ever-changing jigsaw puzzle. (See school district map in the Introduction.)

The following districts were created from parts of the original District #26 area: District #39 served Battick and an area south of Grassrange; #89 (1911) served the area



Upper Flatwillow School (1928): (Back row) Richard Tripp, Willie Moreland, Olivea Moreland, teacher, Ralph Tripp, Jacque Carter (Front row) Charles Brady, Helen Rhea, Mabel Brady, Ruth Tripp, Billy Wiggins, Zella Carter, Stanley Wiggins

south and west of Flatwillow; #106 (1913) served the Glaze School; #107 (1913) Weede and a large area to the east; #121 (1914) Petrolia; #138 (1914) Kelley; #134 (1914) Teigen and Kinnick; #144 South Battick; #149 (1915) Sheldon and East Burgeton; #158 (1916) Berkvam #159 (1916) Winnett, Brush Creek, Cat Creek; #164 (1916) Weston; #191 (1917) Carmichael; #36 (1920) Lone Prairie; #197 (1921) Bachman.

The districts of particular interest to the Flatwillow area



Upper Flatwillow School (1935-36): (Back row) Margaret Wiggins, Deloris Preston, Annabel Cornue, Vernon McCollum. (Front row) Jo Ann Tripp, Angelu Tripp, Kathryn Cornue, Fairman Carter



Wallview School (1913): Hazel Richardson, Bernice Johnson, Doris Richardson, Edith Richardson, Sylvia Bergsing, Fred Grodeon, teacher, Hazel Braithwaite



Wallview School: Charles Fry, Hazel Richardson, Doris Richardson, Bernice Johnson, Hazel Braithwaite, Edith Richardson, Valentine Braithwaite, Sylvia Bergsing, Homer Richardson, Clarence Bergsing, Mary Klezka



Wallview School (1911): Teacher, Miss Lena Houtrouw, Bernice Johnson, Doris Richardson, Edith Richardson, Hazel Richardson, Sylvia Bergsing, Hazel Braithwaite, Valentine Braithwaite, Homer Richardson, Clarence Bergsing

were #36, #89, #106, #158, #191 and #197.

On February 2, 1911, a petition was granted forming District #89. This district had three school locations. The big school was located in Sec. 29-12-26 and was called Wallview or Johnson or Richardson School. This school also served as a church until the church was built in 1915. At a later date, the schoolhouse was moved to section 17 of the same township where it served as a temporary school. In 1942 it was moved to Sec. 14-12-25 and still later to section 22 where it still stands. By the time this school sprouted legs, however, the area was all part of District #36. The other early school in District #89 was called the Joyce or Root or Hell's Hollow School and was located in Sec. 14-12-26. There is a partial list of students and teachers for this district on file in the Petroleum County Community Library.

In 1912 a petition was submitted to form District #106

out of districts #26 and #89. The new district was approved February 15, 1913, and the school was known as the Glaze or Rung School.

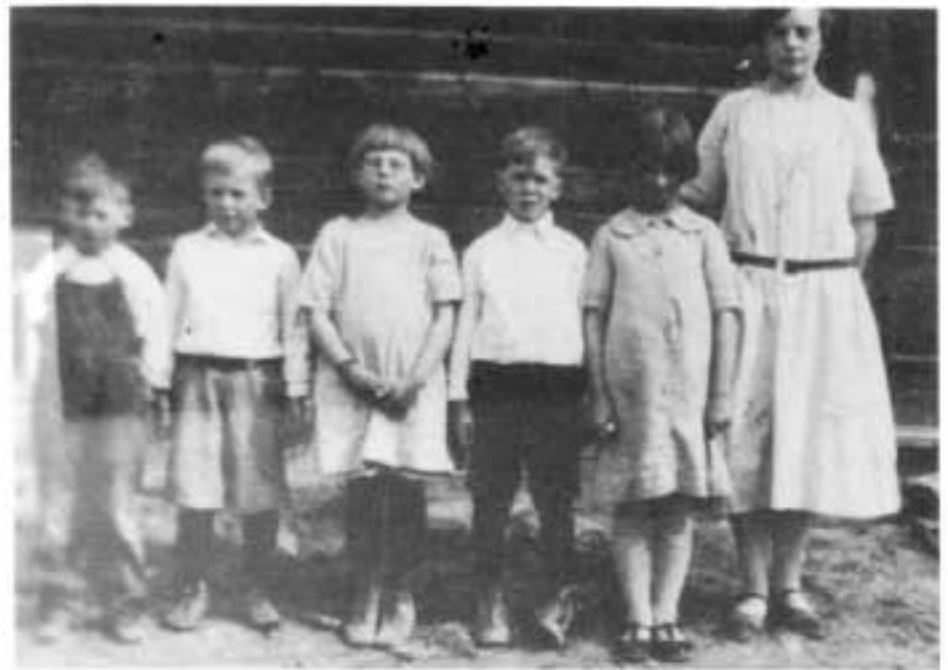
In about 1915 the Flatwillow District opened a school in Yellow Water Basin. An abandoned homestead house belonging to Joe Hallen was used for a schoolhouse. Among those who attended the school were the Berkvam, Doman, Rostad, Kindschy, Stroup, Hawkins and Johnson children. Magdalena Conrad, Mary Feaster, Dorothy Shaw and Viola Youderian were among the teachers. After 1922-23 the school location was changed and the expenses were shared by District #36 and #159.

The Basin School was moved to a new location about three miles north of its original location in 1925 and still later it was moved into District #159 about two miles north of Yellow Water Creek. It was variously called the Stroup, Walker, Basin or Yellow Water School.

District #159 operated a school in the same general area north of Yellow Water Creek in about 1916. A new building was constructed on the Margaret Johnson property. This school served the Johnson, Teich, Ringo, Lee, Davis, Redmond and Walker children during its years of operation. Some of the teachers were Isabelle Davis, Ginevra Van Tassell, Joe Langshausen and Dora Beer.



Wallview School Picnic (1914): Homer Richardson, Valentine Braithwaite, Hazel Richardson, Clarence Bergsing, Doris Richardson, Edith Richardson, Irma Arnold, Sylvia Bergsing, Dwight Wilcox, Mary Klezka, Bernice Johnson, Charles Fry, Arner Nielsen, Hazel Braithwaite, ? Arnold, Leonard Wilcox, ? Minor, Sam Minor, Annie Minor, Leone Wilcox



Walker School (1927): Charles Barnes, Donald Lancelle, Dorothy Lancelle, Ray Barnes, Maxine Barnes, Anna Kleiman, teacher. Wilma Stroup took the picture



Yellow Water Basin School (March 2, 1918): (Back row) Magdalena Conrad, teacher, Georgia Berkvam, Mabel Doman (Front row) Eva Doman, Alma Rostad, Vera Berkvam, Bill Doman and little Lillian Franzen in front



Lone Prairie School (1928): Miss Quanbeck, Goldie Darnell, Joan Clement, Anna Wilkinson, Evelyn Wilkinson



Wallview School



Lone Prairie School (1928): Goldie Darnell, Clare Wilkinson, Harley Pollock Jr., Evelyn Wilkinson (Front row) Anna Wilkinson, Joan Clement, Robert Pollock



Lone Prairie School (1935): (Back row) Wesley Brown, Reuben Maxwell, Robert Wilkinson, Farrel Johnke (Front row) Clay Brown Jr., Robert Maxwell

The people in this area lived near the old Flatwillow stage road. Some of them received their mail and groceries in Flatwillow, some in Grassrange.

By 1916 the people of the Pike Creek and Lone Prairie areas felt they could better represent themselves, so District #158 was formed. It had an East End School and a West End School. The East End School was opened in a house belonging to Jim Markland. Later the district bought land from Fred Hansen and built a schoolhouse across the corner in Sec. 12-12-25. The West End School was on the Lambert place in Sec. 4-12-25.

In 1917 District #191 on the western edge of the district, was formed and Carmichael (or Bender Creek) School was opened. At the time of its formation, nineteen children were listed as potential students — Tottem, Zigan, Mans, Stroming, Ward, Wallace, Henndon and Car-



Temporary Lone Prairie School (1936): (Back row) Lola Wilkinson, Robert Wilkinson, Edna Brown, Wesley Brown (Front row) Leone Wilkinson, Clay Brown Jr.

michael children. Rose Lancelle, Mabel McCabe and Guy Schellenger taught the school at various times.

District #36 was formed in 1920. It became known as the Lone Prairie District. It was a small district to begin with, but eventually it encompassed all of #158, #191 and #106. It operated as a district until 1965. The clerk's records for this district are available from 1920 to 1965. They form a complete history of the district.

People in District #158 had become dissatisfied with their schoolhouse in section 12. The new district #36 included the section 12 location, so school was moved to the Jim Markland house again. He was paid \$7 a month for the use of it. The district sold \$2000 worth of bonds and hired Otto Moore to build a new school. This was a large school and had a full basement and a cistern for water. School was held there from 1922 until 1935.

The district became unable to meet its financial obligation, however; so in 1935-36 the community was forced to hold "temporary" school in the Wallview schoolhouse. The building had been moved near the creek on the McEaney place. No warrants were issued that year. The Wilkinson and Brown children went to the school. The next two years, District #158 was again able to pay a teacher, and school was held at that location.

From the fall of 1938 until the fall of 1942 no activity was recorded in the clerk's records. In 1942 the Wallview schoolhouse was moved from the McEaney site to Sec. 14-12-25, and school was commenced with Ruth Koetitz teaching. When the Zimmerman children were old enough to attend school, the schoolhouse was moved for the last time one mile west. Mrs. Helen Iverson was clerk of this district from 1942 until 1965-66.

The last district formed in the Flatwillow area was #197, created in 1921. It operated the Bachman School for a brief time. The district consolidated with District #159 in 1933.

Flatwillow Cemetery

Beneath the pine-covered rimrocks to the south and east of the original Flatwillow townsite, a quiet spot overlooks the creek and the sagebrush lands beyond. It is here that Fred Lawrence was buried in 1890. As time went on, other area residents chose to bury their loved ones in the peaceful little hollow.

On March 30, 1916, Jens Jorgensen, on whose property the graves were located, officially deeded approximately four acres of land to the Flatwillow Cemetery Association so the continued use of the location as a cemetery could

be assured. A blueprint of the area was drawn and lots were sold for \$5.00 each, each lot providing space for five graves. Some people made a down payment of as little as 50¢ a lot, and paid off the balance over a period of time.

Some of the plots which were purchased have never been used. Over the years, approximately 75 burials have been recorded. There are also a number of unmarked graves.

The cemetery is still maintained and cared for, as has always been the case, with community love and labor.

ALGRA, Henry (Sec. 22-12-25) Henry and Beulah McBride Algra leased the ranch known as the Shaw Ranch from R. E. Bowen in 1944. They had two sons, Jerry (1930) and Tom (1943).

Henry was employed in a flour mill at Harlowton, Montana, until he developed asthma and decided to try ranching. The couple lived on the Hopley Ranch north of Harlowton, later moving to the Maiden Hill Ranch in the Judith Gap area.

Henry married Beulah McBride in 1929 at Harlowton, Montana. In the early 1930's he bought his first band of sheep and drove them over the mountains to the Cheadle area. From there Algras moved to the Bowen Ranch and ran cattle and sheep until they retired in 1971 and moved to Helena, Montana. Henry died in Helena in 1976.

Henry was a large man and Beulah a tiny woman. In later years they could be seen loading hay to feed their livestock. They would drag the bales onto the truck until they got one layer in, then they would go feed that bunch of bales and repeat the process until they had fed everything. Beulah was too small to lift a bale of hay and Henry's asthma didn't leave him with enough air to lift one. They were wonderful, uncomplaining people and good neighbors.

ALLISTON, William (Sec. 5-12-26) (Land to Zimmerman) The school census from District #36 (1920) records show that Allistons had three children: Lucile (1913), Gladys (1915) and Donald (1917). They moved away in 1928.

ALT, Albert Albert and Lorraine Olsen Alt worked for the Nebraska Feeding Co. They had three children: Carla (1951), Allen (1954) and LeRoy (1956). From this community they moved to Dovetail where they worked on the Iverson Ranch. There Albert died of a heart attack and Lorraine and the children moved to Roundup, Montana.

ANDERSON, Lawrence (Sec. 26-12-26) (Land to Harris-bank-USA)

ATWOOD, Eldon Eldon and Norma Roush Atwood appear on the school census for the year 1954-55. Children are listed as: Gailene (1950), Diana (1952) and David (1954).

BACHMAN, August (Sec. 10-13-27) (Land to Lepper) August and Florence Bachman first show up on the 1911 school census. They had seven children: Kale (1898); Louise (1901), married Joe Rine; Fred (1904); Ted (1907); Grace (1909), married Bob Tiller; Leo (1911) and James (1915). They started a school in their area. August died in 1916 and Florence married O. A. Karstedt in 1919. In 1931 they moved to Lewistown.

(W. T. 11-4-21) "To Leo Bachman goes the distinction of having sold the first load of grain in Winnett. It was sold immediately upon the opening of the Hegna Elevator on November 16, 1917."

BAILEY, Benjamin (Sec. 4,5-12-25) (Land to Kepford-Filligan-Pet Co-Shields-Kimmel)

BAILEY, LeRoy LeRoy and Ethel McLaughlin Bailey leased the Henry Hawkins place. They had seven children: Evelyn June (1939), Clara Zo (1942), Charles Fredrick (1942), Lucille Laverne (1945), Walter LeRoy (1948), Arthur Milton (1949) and Jerry Lee (1951).

BAITIS, Henry M. Henry and Else Baitis came to the United States from Germany in 1950 as displaced persons sponsored by Jacob and Inez Vogel. In 1952 the family moved to the Yellow Water ranch property of Pete Tunncliff. They repaired and added to the abandoned Stroup buildings, making a comfortable home for themselves.

Though the road from the highway to Yellow Water Dam had been graded and improved, it was not graveled, and school presented a serious problem for the family. There were no other children in the area, and the closest school, at Flatwillow, was over ten miles away. Henry was determined his children would receive a good education, and it was a major factor in his decision to

leave Petroleum County in 1958 and to move to Eugene, Oregon. In Oregon, the four children — Friedhelm, Hartmut, Rosemarie and Karin — had the benefit of excellent schooling, including the University of Oregon in Eugene. Henry died in 1982.

BAKER, Perry (Sec. 2-12-26) The following information was contributed by Ann Baker McLaughlin:

Perry Baker was born in Hollinbergh, Kansas, in 1871. Perry came to Flatwillow in 1898, arriving at Musselshell, Montana, on a bitter cold day with only a suit jacket and no winter clothes. He took the stage from Musselshell to Flatwillow and walked most of the way to keep from freezing.

He worked at the Wilson Ranch for two years before becoming "Long Jim" Retter's partner in the sheep business and taking out a homestead. In 1905 he and Jim sold their sheep and dissolved the partnership. He and Jim Wilson Sr. became partners in the cattle business for three years. They sold all the cattle in 1908 and Perry went back into the sheep business.

Anna Guiler was a dark-complexioned Scotch-Irish girl who was born in Ravenswood, West Virginia, on November 16, 1877. She received her education in Greenfield, Missouri. She came to Montana in the early 1900s to visit her sister Mona Jordon, wife of Walter Jordon, who lived on the Clement Ranch. Mr. Jordon was Mrs. Hall Clement Sr.'s brother.

In 1906 Perry married Sarah Anna Guiler in Lewistown at the Hawthorne House. Anna was married in a crepe de chine dress, that had rows of tucking from top to bottom, all handmade. Incidentally, two granddaughters were also married in this dress — Mona's daughter, Mona Ellise; and Ann's daughter, Connie.

Anna and Perry established their home in Flatwillow across from the store on the east and the hotel on the

south. The springhouse was back of them to the west. It consisted of a large cement tank with a house built around it. Many people hauled their water from there. The water was piped from a spring about a half mile away. Bakers also had water piped into their house. They later moved this house to their homestead about three quarters of a mile upstream.

Perry had some desert claims in the Howard Coulee area. He ran his sheep there on his famous "Banana Ranch" The Banana Ranch got its name when someone asked Perry what he was going to raise on his desert claims. His answer, "Bananas."

Perry was a practical joker and always out for a good time. When Howard Tripp was new in the country, he needed a horse for a long trip he had to make. He made arrangements with Perry to borrow the horse and admitted that he was a pretty good rider. When it came time to mount the horse, Perry had it blindfolded and was ready to ear it down. Howard knew that he wasn't a broncstomper but hated to admit his reluctance to mount. Perry eared the horse and Howard mounted, then Perry let loose with a flourish. The horse just stood there and looked around. It was an extremely gentle kids' horse!

Harry Tripp herded sheep for Perry, part time, when he first came. On his first trip out he questioned Perry about the large piles of rock that sat on the various hills around. Perry told him that they were monuments to departed Indian chiefs. Harry soon learned the true meaning and value of the "Shepherders' Monuments," and was often thankful for them as the landmarks they were meant to be.

When Petroleum County was formed, Perry was elected sheriff for the first four years. He served the next four years as undersheriff. This eight-year period was the only time Bakers didn't live on the ranch. Perry was



Anna Guiler — Perry Baker



*Mona Ellise Scott — R. C. Carson
Three Weddings for a Lovely Dress*



Connie McLaughlin — John Klock



Mona Baker Scott

postmaster at Flatwillow for 10 years.

Perry died in 1949, and Anna died in 1961. Mona died in 1979. All three are buried in the Flatwillow Cemetery.

Bakers had three children. Almona (1907) married Mr. Scott and moved to Texas. When Almona was born, her father planted the two cottonwood trees which are still near the house at Flatwillow. William Perry (1915) married Isabelle Marquette and lives in California. Anne E. (1917) married Al McLaughlin and lives in Ohio.

The Baker family still owns the home place.



Anne and Al McLaughlin (1983)

BARNES, Arthur (Sec. 33-14-26) Arthur Barnes was born August 15, 1888, on the Judith River near Philbrook, Montana. He was a younger brother of John P. Barnes.

Arthur attended schools at Pleasant Valley, Philbrook, and Utica. In the early 1900's he moved to Lewistown,

Montana, to complete his education. He lived two years in the mining town of Kendall, Montana, where his father had mining interests.

Art and his brother John took out homesteads near Yellow Water Creek about 1912. Art married Ethel Feaster, daughter of John and Mary Feaster. The Feasters lived near Lewistown but became residents of Petroleum County. (See also FEASTER — Petrolia)

Art and Ethel raised eight children — Maxine, Raymond, Charles, Richard, Edith, Mary, Esther, and Stanley. The three older children were school age when the family lived on the homestead. They rode an old white mare named Doughnut to the Walker School. After several years the school was moved to the school section. It was commonly known as the Stroup School. The Barnes children also attended this school.

In 1927 the family moved to Winnett where Art freighted supplies to the oil field in Cat Creek. All of the children except the youngest attended school in Winnett: Maxine graduated from Winnett High School in 1934. The family left Winnett that year and Arthur began doing survey work for the state. He followed this line of work for the Bureau of Reclamation in Montana, Wyoming and South Dakota from 1944 until he retired. He died in 1965. His wife died in 1977.

Maxine married Raymond Smith, and they live in Clarkston, Washington, where Mr. and Mrs. Barnes retired. Raymond lives in Walla Walla, Washington; Charles in Snohomish, Washington; Richard in Clarkston, Washington; Edith (Smith) in Clarkston; Mary (Keller) in Billings, Montana; and Esther (Finley) in Billings. Stanley lives in Helena, Montana.

BARNES, John P. (Sec. 4-13-26) The Barnes family is an old Montana pioneer family. John P. Barnes, grandfather of the above John P. Barnes, came to Montana in 1864 and located in the Jefferson Valley. He raised stock and followed mining. In 1882 he came to the Judith Basin with his wife, Rosetta L. Beeding, and six children. They settled near Philbrook. In 1894 the family moved to Lewistown, Montana.

Mr. Barnes served as the first mayor of Lewistown in 1899 when the town was incorporated. He had been one of the commissioners who organized Meagher County in 1868, and in 1886 he served as a member of the first Fergus County Board of Commissioners after the county was cut off from Meagher County. In the early 1900s he was a partner in the Barnes-King mine in the North Moccasin Mountains.

John S. was a son of John P. Barnes. He and his wife Mary lived near Philbrook on the Judith River where they raised three sons — John P., born in 1886; Arthur, born in 1888; and Van, born about 1890.

John P. and his brother Arthur both took out homesteads near Yellow Water Creek about 1912. John P. was married to Clarice Learmouth, who had come to Cottonwood Creek in Fergus County in May 1901 with her parents and all their possessions loaded in two

wagons and a hayrack. Clarice helped drive the oxen pulling the hayrack of furniture and household goods.

John and Clarice had two children, Loretta (Mrs. J. C. McDonald of Lewistown) and John. The family did not live on their Yellow Water homestead for long. In 1915 John traded the property for land on Cottonwood Creek west of Lewistown.

One memory of the area lingered long in their minds, however. Clarice went in to check her sleeping baby daughter and found, to her horror, a bull snake had crawled into the blanket to keep warm! No harm was done — except to the equally-surprised snake!

BARTLETT, John See BARTLETT — Winnett; LANCELE — Flatwillow

BAUM, Wendell (Sec. 3-12-27) (Land to Wiggins)

BAYER, Fred (Sec. 26-13-27) (Land to county)

BENJAMIN, Hazel (Sec. 24-13-26) (Land to Bearman)

BERCIER, Joseph (Sec. 28-13-27) Joe Bercier leased the Swan Munson place on Alkali Creek. The house was on the east side of the creek and the barns and sheds were on the west side. The creek was boggy, so they had a swinging bridge across it to walk on. The bridge was great fun for kids. There was a large spring just across the fence on the William's place. Bercier had developed this spring and piped the water across to the house.

Joe raised sheep and worked out but was unable to make it. He had an auction sale in the late 1930s and moved to Anaconda, Montana.

BERGSING, Anton (Sec. 30-12-26) (Land to Pet Colverson) Anton and Lizzie Bergsing took one of the first homesteads in the Wallview area. They had two children listed on the school census: Clarence (1899) and Sylvia (1903). They were Norwegian and came from Minneapolis, Minnesota. The following account was taken from "Memories of Yesteryear" by Hazel Richardson Gamel:

"Bergsings had never raised chickens before the summer of 1910. Mrs. Bergsing thought if you put the eggs in the nest you could put any hen on them regardless if she wanted to set or not. She soon learned!

"Mr. Bergsing was one of the first trustees of School District #89. Mr. Braithwaite (another trustee) enjoyed telling old tales about when he went to school in England, and the trustees would get way off the subject. Mr. Bergsing, in his Norwegian accent, would say, 'Ya! Let's get back to business now.'

"For a few months we kept a donkey which belonged to a neighbor who lived in the Devils Basin. All of us children tried to ride it, including Sylvia Bergsing. A donkey is a little hard to ride without a saddle. Sylvia wanted a little speed, so she got the donkey out on the road and started whipping him. Finally, she got to going pretty good, her hat flew off, and then she fell off. We ran to her to see if she was hurt. We got her up, brushed her off, and she said, 'I just jumped off to get my hat.'

"One time when Papa was gone hauling grain, and wouldn't be home for several days, we ran out of water in our barrels. We had only the saddle horse left at home, so therefore we couldn't haul water. Mr. Bergsing came by and found out about our water situation. He had gotten his well dug and had good water. He said nothing, but went on home, ate supper and decided to bring us some drinking water. He and his boy, Clarence, came up the mile and a quarter to our place carrying water."

BERKIN, Tom (Sec. 17-12-26) (Land to McEneaney-Melby-Hughes) The following history about Thomas Berkin was taken from the Winnett Times of March 6, 1948: "Thomas A. Berkin, born 78 years ago in the old territory of Montana, died suddenly of a heart attack after a colorful life which coincided with the most stirring days of Montana history. Horse trader, adventurer, friend of Chief Joseph, cattle and sheep rancher, Berkin was a son of a vigilante and a reliable authority on Montana history.

"Tom Berkin was a Montana pioneer the day he was born, March 25, 1869, in Boulder, Montana. His father, William Berkin, came to Montana in 1861 (the year the Civil War started) and died at the age of 101 in 1927.

"Tom married Mabel Lillian Coburn, a widow, in Boulder in 1894. They lived there for four years until he bought a ranch near White Sulphur Springs, Montana, which he operated until 1908. The family moved to Lewistown, Montana, where he became deputy game warden, a job he held for 17 years. In 1917 he bought a ranch on Flatwillow Creek which he operated until the time of his wife's death in 1934, when he moved to Roundup.

"His father, William Berkin, established the town of Boulder, Montana, as a natural headquarters for the old Diamond R Transportation Company which freighted from Fort Benton to Bannack and Virginia City. He made a hair-raising expedition along the Musselshell River to find a better road from Virginia City to Fort Benton in 1865, which was enlivened with numerous brushes with the Indians.

"Careless Creek was named, by the elder Berkin, when one of the men on the expedition was shot by his own gun, when his horse stumbled while hunting buffalo.

"The party was attacked by the Indians on Flatwillow Creek and nearly all of their equipment destroyed. Those who escaped, cached what was left under the bank of a tributary of Flatwillow Creek. It was discovered years later by Tom Berkin, who was then living in the area, and it is now at the State historical library.

"A vigilante, William Berkin was one of the crew which helped bring about the end of the Plummer gang. He, John Featherston, Neil Howie and J. X. Beidler were the first four U.S. Deputy Marshals for Montana Territory.

"When he was a very young man, doctors told Tom Berkin he had only a year to live, but he would have been 79 the 25th of this month. Although his health was never robust, his friends credit his recovery to the fact that he